

# Toronto District School Board

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Policy P037

Title: **EQUITY**

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Effected: 23 June 1999  
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Reviewed: 18 April 2018  
Authorization: Board of Trustees

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## 1. RATIONALE

This Equity Policy (the “Policy”) is developed to support the Toronto District School Board’s (TDSB) commitment to the elimination of institutional [Discrimination](#) and promotion of [Fairness](#), [Equity](#), [Acceptance](#) and [Inclusion](#). The Policy is governed by and fully complies with the legislative requirements of the *Constitution Act, 1982*, the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, the *Education Act*, as well as the Ontario Ministry of Education’s Policy/Program Memoranda PPM 119: Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools, and decisions of the Board of Trustees.

## 2. OBJECTIVE

To ensure that [Fairness](#), [Equity](#), [Diversity](#), [Acceptance](#), [Inclusion](#), and the elimination of all forms of Discrimination are essential principles of our school system and are integrated into all TDSB policies, procedures, programs, operations, and practices.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

See Appendix A for a full glossary of definitions and terms.

## 4. RESPONSIBILITY

The Director of Education holds primary responsibility for overseeing this Policy. Implementation is assigned to the Executive Superintendent, Equity and Engagement.

## 5. APPLICATION AND SCOPE

This Policy applies to all TDSB employees and Trustees.

The Policy also covers TDSB students, parents and guardians, [Caregivers](#), volunteers, consultants, contractors and vendors, permit-holders, community partners and visitors.

## 6. POLICY

- (a) The TDSB values the contributions and engagement of all members of our diverse community of students, staff, parents/guardians, Elders and community groups to our mission, values and goals.
- (b) The TDSB acknowledges that [Equity](#) of opportunity and Equity of access to our programs, services, and resources are critical to the achievement of successful outcomes for our students, employees, and parent/guardian, Caregivers and community partners.
- (c) The TDSB acknowledges that certain groups in our society are treated inequitably because of individual and systemic Biases, [Barriers](#), Oppression and [Discrimination](#) related to [Race](#), Colour, [Creed](#), [Culture](#), Ethnicity, linguistic origin, [Disability](#), level of ability, socio-economic class, [Age](#), [Ancestry](#), [Nationality](#), [Place of Origin](#), Religion, Sex, [Gender Identity](#), [Gender Expression](#), [Sexual Orientation](#), [Body Image](#), citizenship, immigration status, [Family Status](#), and [Marital Status](#). Similar Biases, Barriers, [Oppression](#) and Discrimination have also impacted on Canada's [First Nation](#), [Métis](#) and [Inuit](#) population.
- (d) The TDSB acknowledges that individual and systemic [Bias](#), Oppression and Discrimination exist within our school system, and, regardless of intent, may be perpetuated unless we all take focused, explicit, persistent and determined action to identify, challenge and overcome them.
- (e) The TDSB acknowledges that inequitable treatment leads to educational, social, and career outcomes that do not accurately reflect the abilities, experiences, contributions and potential of our students, employees, parent/guardian, Caregivers and community partners.
- (f) “Katelynn’s Principle” (see Appendix B)

The TDSB affirms the following statements, collectively known as Katelynn's Principle, which shall be applied in making any decision affecting a student:

- The child must be at the centre of the decision;
- The child is an individual with rights: who must always be seen; whose voice must be heard; and who must be listened to and respected;
- The child's heritage must be taken into consideration and respected. Attention must be paid to the broad and diverse communities the child identifies with, including communities defined by matters such as [Race](#), [Ethnicity](#), [Creed](#), [Language](#), [Gender Identity](#) / expression, [Disability](#)/ level of ability, [Socio-Economic Status](#) and [Sexual Orientation](#);
- Actions must be taken to ensure that a child who is capable of forming their own views is able to express those views freely and safely about matters affecting them;
- The child's views must be given due weight in context of the child's Age and maturity. They must be given the opportunity to participate before any decisions affecting them are made, whether the participation is direct or through a support person or representative. They must be engaged through honest and respectful dialogue about how and why decisions affecting them are made; and
- Every person who provides services to children or services affecting children is a child advocate. Advocacy may be a child's lifeline and it must occur from the point of first contact and on a continuous basis thereafter.

(g) The TDSB will ensure that our school system is built on the principles of anti-Oppression, [Anti-Racism](#), [Non-discrimination](#), equitable and Inclusive Education, which:

*i. is a foundation of excellence;*

*In a diverse society, [Equity](#) is a fundamental requirement for educational excellence and high standards of student achievement.*

- ii. meets individual needs;**  
*Equity does not mean treating all people in the same way but, rather, responding to the individual needs of each, recognizing and respecting individual social identities and the [Intersectionality](#) of multiple identities and providing the essential and necessary conditions, Accommodations and interventions needed to help them succeed.*
- iii. identifies and eliminates barriers;**  
*All students and staff are supported equitably through the identification and removal of discriminatory [Bias](#) and or [Barriers](#), whether individual, systemic or intersecting, that limit their ability to equal access, participation and/or outcomes in schools and workplaces and achieve their full potential.*
- iv. promotes a sense of belonging;**  
*Equity and Inclusive Education contribute to every student's and staff person's sense of [Acceptance](#) and well-being.*
- v. involves the broad community;**  
*Effective and meaningful school–community partnerships are an essential component of an equitable and Inclusive Education system.*
- vi. builds on and enhances previous and existing initiatives;**  
*Sound research and analysis of successful policies and practices form the basis for the development and sharing of resources.*
- vii. is effectively demonstrated throughout the system.**  
*The [Board](#) must ensure consistency, accountability, transparency and clear measures of success to effectively incorporate the principles of Equity, anti-Oppression and [Inclusive Education](#) throughout their policies, programs, structures and practices.*

## 7. POLICY REQUIREMENTS

The TDSB will ensure that principles of [Fairness](#), [Non-discrimination](#), anti-Oppression, [Anti-Racism](#), [Equity](#), [Acceptance](#) and [Inclusion](#) are embedded in each of the following areas of focus:

- Board Policies, Procedures, Practices, Programs, and Initiatives
- Shared and Committed Leadership
- School-Community Relationships
- Inclusive [Curriculum](#) and Assessment Practices
- Counselling Supports, Academic Guidance and Mental Health and Well-being
- [Human Rights](#) Accommodations
- Staff Development/ Professional Learning
- [School Climate](#) and the Prevention of [Discrimination](#) and [Harassment](#)
- Accountability and Transparency

### 7.1 Board Policies, Procedures, Practices, Programs and Initiatives

The TDSB will ensure that [Fairness](#), [Non-discrimination](#), anti-Oppression, Anti-Racism, Equity, [Acceptance](#) and [Inclusion](#) are integrated into our policies, procedures, programs and initiatives as essential elements of the school system.

The TDSB's policies, procedures, programs and initiatives will ensure that the Equity needs of all students, employees, Trustees, parents/ guardians, [Caregivers](#), [Elders](#), volunteers, visitors, permit-holders, contractors, community members and partners are identified and addressed by:

- regular review and revision of existing policies and procedures to embed Equity, inclusive and [Anti-Oppressive Education](#) principles;
- system implementation, compliance and accountability of Equity, inclusive and Anti-Oppression Education policies;
- ensuring that Equity, inclusive and Anti-Oppression Education principles are embedded in TDSB, school and department improvement plans;
- implementation of positive employment and Anti-Oppression Practices that support equitable recruitment, hiring, mentoring, professional development, retention, promotion, and succession planning.

- 7.1.1 The TDSB will upgrade its policy development and policy review processes to ensure that Equity is integrated into the TDSB's policies, procedures, programs and initiatives.
- 7.1.2 The TDSB will ensure that mechanisms are in place at all levels of the system for developing and implementing operations and practices that promote Equity of access, participation and outcomes. These mechanisms will be regularly reviewed and assessed for their effectiveness.
- 7.1.3 All data collection, research, surveys, census, information systems and services shall be developed, collected, utilized, maintained and delivered using a critical Equity lens, ensuring full accessibility, respect of individual privacy rights, inclusive demographic representation and the complexity of all identities (including [Intersectionality](#) of multiple social identities) This information should be disaggregated to be presented using the most end-user friendly design.
- 7.1.4 TDSB policies, procedures, programs and initiatives will reflect the diverse viewpoints, needs, and aspirations of members of stakeholder communities, particularly those of groups whose voices traditionally and systemically have been marginalized and excluded.
- 7.1.5 Financial and human resources will be prioritized and devoted to promoting and embedding principles, practices and structures of Equity, anti- Oppression and [Inclusion](#) within the school system.
- 7.1.6 The TDSB will ensure structures, policies and procedures are in place to distribute funding equitably among schools and school programs, recognizing that certain disparities exist in many school's fundraising capacity which lead to inequality of resources. The TDSB will conduct annual resource audits of school needs and assets, engage in community consultations, and collect and examine supplemental data(in addition to the Learning Opportunities Index) to ensure greater Equity among schools with different [Socio-Economic Status](#).

## 7.2 Employment and Promotion Practices

The TDSB recognizes that there are [Barriers](#) to employment and promotion that historically have had a discriminatory impact on diverse groups of people. The TDSB is committed to the identification and removal of such [Bias](#) and Barriers through data collection, training, reporting, development, review, and implementation of employment and promotion policies, procedures, and practices that result in and sustain a workforce that, at all levels, reflects, understands and responds to a diverse population.

The TDSB is committed to ensuring that hiring and promotion practices are anti-oppressive, Bias-free, consistent with the Ontario Human Rights Code and promote equitable representation of [Diversity](#) at all levels of the school system. All employees will have equitable opportunities for advancement; ensuring that their skills and knowledge are valued and used appropriately; and that they have equitable access to the necessary supports for their professional development needs (see Employment Equity Policy (P029)).

## 7.3 Shared and Committed Leadership

The principle of shared and committed leadership recognizes that all partners in education including community partners, parents/guardians, [Caregivers](#), and students are responsible for preparing students to live in a diverse society. Bringing change to instructional practices and the learning [Culture](#), however, requires strong and focused leadership from the Board of Trustees, Director and Associate Director(s) of Education, executive officers, superintendents, principals, and teachers. All system leaders and decision-makers play a crucial role in identifying and addressing systemic inequities and/or Barriers. To promote the principle of shared and committed leadership, leadership initiatives and leadership learning opportunities will be provided for students, school and system leaders, teachers, support staff, and Trustees.

### 7.3.1 System Leadership

The TDSB will provide leadership that is committed to identifying personal, interpersonal and institutional discriminatory attitudes and behaviours, an anti-Oppression awareness of the [Power](#) and [Privilege](#), systemic inequities and Barriers, and demonstrating accountability for their removal, with the goal of achieving [Equity](#) for all. The TDSB will ensure that communication is an integral part of leadership development and includes active engagement of students, parents/guardians/ [Caregivers](#), [Elders](#), community groups, federations and unions, universities and colleges, service organizations, and relevant partners and stakeholders and listening to

[historically and currently disenfranchised groups and communities.](#)

### 7.3.2 School Leadership

The TDSB's school leaders, both administration and staff, will have a consistent and continuous school-wide focus on embedding a foundation of [Equity](#) to support student achievement and well-being within a [Culture](#) of high expectations. This Culture is guided by the fundamental principle that every child can learn and achieve with a commitment to reach every student by providing the necessary supports for them to continually reach their full potential. School leaders are expected to foster values of a caring adult for all students, by modelling healthy and respectful behaviours, listening to student voice/lived experiences and providing support and mentoring when necessary.

Both School and System leaders must also ensure there are no [Bias](#), [Barriers](#) or inequity both **within** and/ or **between** schools and school programs. This includes disparities such as: streaming students based on perceived levels of ability which limits their full potential, limited access to speciality programs, competition for pupils between schools, the application and impact of dress codes, optional attendance, and economic inequity caused by local fundraising wealth [Disparity](#).

### 7.3.3 Student Leadership

The TDSB acknowledges the important role that student leaders play in influencing their peers and school [Culture](#) and will ensure intentional engagement of formal and informal student leaders. TDSB further recognizes it is critical to ensure that students whose voices/experiences are not reflected currently or have been excluded from leadership roles historically/traditionally are actively engaged with programming, practices and structures that fosters participation, leadership and student voice. The TDSB is therefore committed to engage students in their education and encourage students to actively participate through opportunities of student voice, activism and collaboration that promote a Culture of [Fairness](#), [Non-discrimination](#), anti-Oppression, [Equity](#), [Acceptance](#) and [Inclusion](#).



## 7.4 School-Community Relationships

- 7.4.1 The TDSB will continue to maintain and develop effective school-community relationships that enable representation and active participation from diverse communities. To enhance educational opportunities for all, the TDSB will ensure the [Inclusion](#) of the perspectives, experiences, rights and needs of [historically and currently disenfranchised groups and communities](#).
- 7.4.2 The TDSB will continuously strive to increase cooperation and collaboration among home, school and the community at large through a commitment to on-going, open dialogue in partnership with historically and currently disenfranchised groups and communities. The TDSB will continue to work with educators, support staff, local employers, community stakeholders, [Elders](#), parents/guardians, [Caregivers](#), youth leaders and students to build on success and increase system capacity through a [Whole-School Approach](#).
- 7.4.3 The TDSB will regularly review the structures of its community advisory committees and partnerships to help ensure that they reflect the [Diversity](#) of the broader community.
- 7.4.3.1. The TDSB will ensure all permits for community use of schools will be subject to an Equity review, to ensure equitable distribution and elimination of any [Bias](#) or [Barriers](#) to community permit access/participation. All permit holders shall also agree to promote [Positive School Climates](#) consistent with the TDSB Code of Conduct, TDSB Promoting a Positive School Climate Procedure and the OHRC.
- 7.4.3.2. The TDSB will ensure that all partnerships enhance and complement the commitments of this policy.
- 7.4.4 Parent / guardian / caregiver engagement will be a priority at the TDSB because the [Board](#) believes education is a shared responsibility among parents/ guardian/ Caregiver, the community, students, staff and the Board. The Board will provide parents/ guardians/ Caregivers with the information they need to support their children's education and will involve them in decisions, which affect their children and their schools'. The [Board](#) will

remain committed to ensuring that all parents/guardians, [Caregivers](#), and members of its diverse communities have opportunities to participate in the school system, and will provide the support necessary to achieve that goal (see the TDSB's Parent and Community Involvement Policy (P023)).

## 7.5 Inclusive Curriculum and Assessment Practices

The TDSB is committed to providing each student with the knowledge, experiences, skills, attitudes, and behaviours needed to live in a complex and diverse world - one that values multiple ways of knowing and being. To promote principles of [Equity](#), anti- Oppression, [Anti-Racism](#) and [Inclusive Education](#) through the [Curriculum](#), the TDSB will practice inclusive Curriculum.

Curriculum is defined as the total learning environment, including the physical environment, learning materials, pedagogical practices, accessibility, assessment instruments, [School Climate](#) and co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.

Inclusive Curriculum strives for Equity by providing a balance of multiple perspectives, focus on child-centered learning that meets individual needs, ensures fair access, participation and outcomes, embraces [Diversity](#) and learner differences, promoting equitable opportunities for all learners. [Anti-Oppressive Education](#), explores Privileges and Power Imbalances within social groups and structures and a deep commitment to changing how educators conceptualize and engage in Curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, classroom management and school [Culture](#). Based on the acknowledgement that [Eurocentrism](#), [Colonialism](#) and other curricular [Bias](#) have perpetuated inequities, [Systemic Discrimination](#) and further [Marginalization](#), the TDSB will enable all students to see themselves, the Diversity of others and equitable, anti-oppressive learning practices reflected in the Curriculum by ensuring that:

- the Curriculum of our schools accurately reflects and uses the variety of knowledge and ways of knowing of all peoples as the basis for instruction; students both see themselves and the Diversity and differences of others and the wider world reflected in their learning environments;
- it actively educates students to understand the causes and impacts of inequity in society, and to understand the similarities, differences, [Intersectionality](#) of multiple social identities and the connections between different forms of [Discrimination](#) and social [Power Imbalances](#), systemic [Oppression](#), Privileges and the [Bias](#) and [Barriers](#) that support them; and

- it helps students to acquire the skills and knowledge that enable them to challenge unjust practices, and to build a strong sense of self, positive and healthy human relationships among their fellow students, and among all members of society.

#### 7.5.1 Language and Literacy

Language and literacy proficiency are an important foundation of academic success. Students, regardless of their social identities, come from all [Language](#) backgrounds. The TDSB acknowledges the importance that a student's first Language can have on their engagement in learning and potential Barriers faced, including for learners with visual, auditory and or verbal challenges and will develop key strategies that support first Language accessibility to actively engage these students, as well as, their parents/guardians and [Caregivers](#). The TDSB recognizes the various Languages spoken within its student population and affirms the value of students' first/ Indigenous Languages while ensuring Language and literacy proficiency in one or both of Canada's official Languages.

#### 7.5.2 Student Evaluation, Assessment, and Placement

The TDSB acknowledges that Systemic Discriminatory Bias and Barriers produce inequitable opportunities, outcomes and fair assessment practices for many [historically and currently disenfranchised groups and communities](#). The TDSB is therefore committed to evaluation, assessment, and placement processes that are sensitive to all students' backgrounds and individual needs, as well as personal and family experiences. The TDSB further commits to develop operational processes to identify troubling [Disparity](#) arising from inequitable Demographic data trends in achievement and other [Opportunity Gaps](#), identify the potential Barriers and Bias that produce these disparities and remedy them.

#### 7.5.3 Student Engagement

The TDSB will promote, acknowledge and value student voice, input and active involvement in their students' educational experiences. The TDSB will foster student self-advocacy and empowerment, including student and peer leadership opportunities for both traditional and non-traditional student leaders. Every effort will be made to ensure that student engagement opportunities are communicated in multiple, accessible formats. Students

will be provided with equitable access, to all engagement opportunities including student council, SuperCouncil and will have access to safe school committees and a variety of student-led activities, teams, and/or clubs.

Engagement will be equitable to ensure that no voices are excluded, ignored or Privileged to the disadvantage of one or more [Social Identity](#) groups over another.

All students will be provided with equitable opportunities to be successful in our system. The TDSB will identify and remove systemic [Barriers](#) to ensure that all learners are provided with supports and rewards to develop their abilities and achieve their aspirations. The TDSB recognizes the diverse needs of all students and will ensure a wide variety of assessment strategies and instruments are used to inform short and long-term planning to reduce gaps in student achievement and improve student learning and well-being. The TDSB will be responsive, accessible and integrated characterized by high expectations and success for all. The TDSB further recognizes and encourages co-curricular activities that offer students opportunities to achieve success outside the classroom that can contribute to their engagement in learning and success inside the classroom, as well as with before- and after-school licensed child care and/or programs (e.g., those focused on sport, recreation, the arts, and Culture).

## **7.6 Counselling Supports, Academic Guidance and Mental Health and Well-being**

The TDSB recognizes the link between [Equity](#), [Anti-Oppressive Practices](#), [Acceptance](#), [Inclusion](#), and mental health and well-being. The TDSB is committed to a transformed school [Culture](#) where:

- mental health and well-being is integrated into every aspect of each student's school experience;
- a shared understanding of the connection between mental health, well-being and student achievement supports every student's academic and personal success;
- a shared responsibility for every student's mental health and well-being guides decision making and the allocation of resources; and
- services are aligned and responsive to the needs of students and staff.
- academic guidance supports all students to reach their full potential and challenges Biased structures and systemic [Barriers](#) that attempt to limit students based on perceived level of academic ability.
- equitable distribution of resources and supports to enhance student placement opportunities and achievement outcomes.

The TDSB will ensure staff receive professional learning based on the belief that all students can learn, and that this belief will be reflected in classroom teachers' and guidance counsellors' expectations of students, assessment and evaluation practices, and placement practices. Student supports will be provided in a culturally responsive and socially sensitive manner. Through the instructional approach, [Universal Design for Learning](#) educators will respond effectively to the strengths and needs of all students, provide access to the [Curriculum](#) for all students, and design products and environments accessible to everyone, regardless of [Age](#), skills, or situation.

The TDSB will identify stigma and [Bias](#) and help to remove any discriminatory Barriers that impact student success in the school system and support health and well-being for all students. The TDSB recognizes that counselors, including social workers, psychologists, guidance teachers, child and youth workers, attendance counsellors, child and youth counsellors, occupational and physiotherapists, speech Language pathologists and other professional support staff provide essential help in responding to the mental health and well-being needs of students from diverse groups in addition to providing support for all students.

## **7.7 Human Rights Accommodations**

The TDSB will fulfill its legal [Duty to accommodate](#) (short of [Undue hardship](#)) under the Ontario Human Rights Code. The TDSB will take measures that enable people to benefit from, and access services equally and to perform to the best of their ability at school or at work.

[Human Rights](#) Accommodations include adjustments made to policies, procedures, programs or practices, as well as adjustments to physical settings which help remove Barriers to equal access and eliminate [Discrimination](#). These Accommodations are provided so that individuals are not disadvantaged or discriminated against on the basis of the prohibited grounds of Discrimination, as identified in the Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC) and also according to the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (see related TDSB Accessibility Policy (P069)).

The principles of [Inclusive Design](#) will be embedded in the TDSB's policies, procedures, programs and practices to enable equitable access, participation and the elimination of systemic [Barriers](#) where identified.

The TDSB will develop and communicate detailed operational procedures to ensure a clear process for Human Rights Accommodations associated with areas of [Creed](#) and [Gender Identity](#) and expression and any other areas requiring Accommodations under the OHRC.

## 7.8 Staff Development/Professional Learning

The TDSB is committed to ongoing staff development and professional learning to create an equitable, anti-oppressive, accepting, safe and inclusive positive climate that supports health and well-being for all students, staff, and parents/guardians/[Caregivers](#).

The TDSB will ensure staff are provided training opportunities, resources and supports to acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviours that enables the identification and elimination of inequitable and discriminatory practices, [Bias](#) and Barriers while contributing to positive school and workplace climates.

### 7.8.1 Building Capacity

The TDSB will increase capacity among staff to better understand and embed principles of [Equity](#), [Non-discrimination](#), anti-Oppression, [Diversity](#), and [Inclusive Education](#), through [Collaborative Learning Communities](#) and professional learning opportunities at all staff levels. To better support both student well-being and achievement, by closing [Achievement Gaps](#), the TDSB will ensure all staff better understand the needs of students who are most under-served, most vulnerable, most marginalized and are most impacted by the Barriers and Biases in our systems and structures.

The TDSB will ensure all staff have the capacity to best identify and effectively challenge and eliminate, individual and systemic, Bias and Barriers to access, participation and outcomes.

To ensure [Positive School Climates](#), accepting and supportive of all students, the TDSB will create an inclusive, respectful, fair, and Discrimination-free school system while improving individual and collective behaviour and organizational and institutional practices.

### 7.8.2 Equity Focused School Improvement Plan

Every school improvement plan shall have [Equity](#) focused professional learning priorities based on data results specific to the needs assessment of a school's community which would reference the results of the school's bi-annual [School Climate](#) survey, safe schools, achievement and well-being data trends and any other relevant information. A review of the school's classroom strategies that promote school-wide Equity and Inclusive Education will be completed by the school's Safe and Accepting Schools Team. The TDSB will ensure that, in accordance with the Ministry of

Education's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy (PPM144), each school has in place a [Safe and Accepting Schools Team](#).

### 7.8.3 Professional Learning Activities

The TDSB will provide opportunities for teachers, guidance counsellors, support staff, administrators, and Trustees, to participate in professional learning and training opportunities such as [Bias](#), [Power](#), [Privilege](#), and existing laws and policies, practices, frameworks, and pedagogies that critically examine and address anti-Oppression, [Anti-Racism](#) specifically Anti-Indigenous and [Anti-Black Racism](#)), and challenges faced by Indigenous students, those with physical and intellectual disabilities and those facing [Islamophobia](#), [anti-Semitism](#), Sexism, Homophobia, [Classism](#), [Ableism](#), [Transphobia](#), and other forms of historic, institutional [Discrimination](#). The TDSB will also ensure adequate communication and knowledge sharing to increase students', parents'/guardians' and [Caregivers](#)' knowledge and understanding of [Equity](#) and [Inclusive Education](#) in these same respects.

The TDSB will also ensure professional learning that deepens staff awareness of gender Diversity, [Sexual Orientation](#), [Race](#), ability, class and the [Intersectionality](#) of multiple social identities. Professional learning will offer effective, early intervention and prevention strategies, as well as, practices to deal with incidents related to [Human Rights](#), [Power](#) and [Privilege](#), [Racism](#), gender-based violence, [Homophobia](#) / [Transphobia](#), sexual Harassment, inappropriate sexual behaviour, abuse and neglect, unhealthy relationships, bullying and violence prevention, [Microaggression](#), and any discriminatory and or harmful behaviours associated with Bias, [Prejudice](#) or Hate.

7.8.4 The TDSB will develop and deliver, on continuous basis, professional development programs that educate teachers and other staff about bullying prevention and strategies for promoting a [Positive School Climate](#). The TDSB will ensure all staff receive these programs at least once annually.

### 7.8.5 Building Awareness

The TDSB will make every effort to improve awareness of the negative impact on students' lives of discriminatory behaviour and attitudes,

including [Racism](#), Anti-Black and Anti-Indigenous Racism, [Islamophobia](#), [anti-Semitism](#), [Lookism](#), [Body Image](#) Discrimination, [Sexism](#), Ableism, [Classism](#) and [Homophobia](#) / [Transphobia](#), and to help education leaders, Trustees, and staff change individual behaviour and institutional practices to eliminate systemic [Barriers](#) and [Bias](#).

## 7.9 School Climate and the Prevention of Discrimination and Harassment

The TDSB believes all students need to feel that they belong, are heard, accepted and cared for through the creation of positive climates that reflect themselves, value their voices and foster a [Culture](#) of healthy relationships. Therefore the TDSB will embed principles of [Equity](#) and [Inclusive Education](#) in the TDSB's learning and working environment to support a [Positive School Climate](#) and Culture of mutual respect.

A Positive School Climate exists when all members of the school community feel safe, included, and accepted, where positive behaviours and interactions are actively promoted and supported.

The TDSB will create positive school and workplace climates, free of Harassment and [Discrimination](#) by ensuring a clear prevention education strategy focused on:

- increasing staff capacity and student awareness;
- a supported, transparent process, free from reprisals, for students, staff, parents/guardians, [Caregivers](#) and community to voice concerns, make reports and lodge complaints if subjected and or witnesses to [Harassment](#), or [discrimination](#) or a target of Bias, [Prejudice](#) or [Hate](#).
- conducting quantitative and qualitative research on school safety that examine reasons for the over-representation of suspensions/ expulsion among certain student demographic populations, particularly: Black, Indigenous and students with special education needs.
- a system to gather and track reports of incidents and complaints related to [Harassment](#), [Discrimination](#), [Bias](#), [Prejudice](#) or [Hate](#) and report this information to the [Board](#).

Harassment, bullying and/or Discrimination whether intended or not, is unacceptable as outlined in the TDSB's Human Rights Policy (P031) and the Workplace Harassment Prevention Policy (P034), the Caring and Safe Schools Policy (P051), and the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Procedure (PR703).

The TDSB will follow the stipulations on discipline for Harassment for staff and students for any code of conduct violations, including those motivated by Hate, Bias or [Prejudice](#).



Harassment is prohibited under the Ontario Human Rights Code, Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Ontario Education Act.

Students, employees, parents/guardians, [Caregivers](#), and community partners will be provided with effective procedures for resolving concerns and complaints that may arise from their experiences of unfair or inequitable treatment within the school system. These policies and procedures will give students and staff the opportunity to report incidents of bullying, Discrimination and Harassment without fear of reprisal and while also ensuring the TDSB respond in a timely manner: Reporting of Suspected Wrongdoing (Whistleblowing) Policy (P066) and Reporting of Suspected Wrongdoing (Whistleblowing) Procedure (PR710), Workplace Harassment Prevention Policy (P034) and Human Rights Policy (P031), Workplace Harassment Prevention and Human Rights Procedure (PR515), and the Workplace Violence Prevention Policy (P072).

Complaints of Discrimination and/or Harassment based on any of the prohibited grounds under the OHRC are subject to investigation and action under TDSB Human Rights Policy (P031). Complaints of employee Harassment may be subject to investigation and action under the Workplace Harassment Prevention Policy (P034), Complaints of bullying, repeated bullying and any behaviours motivated by Bias, [Prejudice](#) and Hate are subject to investigation and action under the Provincial Code of Conduct (as detailed in Promoting A [Positive School Climate](#) (PR697) and Board Code of Conduct (PR585). Complaints of workplace violence by an employee are subject to investigation and action under the Workplace Violence Prevention Policy (P072). Where incidents overlap with specific policy areas, concurrent complaints and investigations may be required. All complaints must be taken seriously and investigated by the appropriate administrator, manager or supervisor.

## **7.10 Accountability and Transparency**

### 7.10.1 The TDSB will:

- i. develop an [Equity](#) Assessment Tool based on requirements of this Policy and will apply it to development and review of all TDSB policies, procedures, programs and initiatives.
- ii. ensure that an annual [Board](#) improvement plan is aligned with the commitments of this Policy and Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy;
- iii. establish processes that include performance indicators, compliance and reporting mechanisms, data collection and tracking to monitor progress

and assess the effectiveness of this Policy and related procedures;

- iv. provide information about Equity and Inclusive Education policies, procedures, and practices to students, administrators, teachers, parents/guardians, [Caregivers](#), school staff, school councils, and volunteers. Support will also be provided to access this information for those whose first [Language](#) is not English;
- v. publish an annual Equity report from the Director of Education, which will inform the Ministry of Education and the local community about the progress the TDSB has made in meeting its strategic goals.

7.10.2 TDSB School Principals will:

- i. develop school improvement plans that are aligned with the Equity Policy commitments and Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education strategy;
- ii. review and establish self-assessment processes to determine the effectiveness of the school's Equity and Inclusive Education plans and procedures;
- iii. consult with School Council and Safe Schools Committee regarding progress; and
- iv. report progress annually.

The TDSB will regularly communicate all [Equity](#) related legislative, [Board](#) and Ministry directives to administrators, staff, students, parents/guardians, [Caregivers](#), and the community. The TDSB will make efforts to assist parents/guardians and Caregivers whose first [Language](#) is not English or who require an [Accommodation](#) to access the necessary information.

## **8. SPECIFIC DIRECTIVES**

The Director is authorized to issue operational procedures to implement this Policy.

## **9. EVALUATION AND MONITORING**

This Policy will be reviewed at a minimum every four (4) years from the effective date.

The TDSB will measure successful implementation of its policy commitments through regular evaluation, reports and review:

- At least every two years, each student (from grades 4-12), parent/guardian and staff will be anonymously surveyed about their experience within school climates with a focus on [Positive School Climates](#), [Acceptance](#), [Inclusion](#), well-being, [Equity](#) and safety.
- At least every 5 years, a demographic census of students, parent/guardians, and staff will be conducted.

This School Climate data and demographic census data will be analysed for correlations with all other relevant reporting data and statistics. The analysis results should be used to identify [Equity](#) gaps and systemic [Barriers](#). The results can also be used to measure success of prevention programs and to prioritize areas of focus for [Board](#) and school improvement plans.

## **10. REFERENCE DOCUMENTS**

### **TDSB Policies:**

- Accessibility Policy (P069)
- Caring and Safe Schools Policy (P051)
- Early Learning and Care Policy (P022)
- Employment Equity Policy (P029)
- Gender Based Violence Policy (P071)
- Human Rights Policy (P031)
- Parent and Community Involvement Policy (P023)
- Reporting of Suspected Wrongdoing (Whistleblowing) Policy (P066)
- Workplace Harassment Prevention Policy (P034)
- Workplace Violence Prevention Policy (P072).

### **TDSB Operational Procedures:**

- Bullying Prevention and Intervention Procedure (PR703)
- Reporting of Suspected Wrongdoing (Whistleblowing) Procedure (PR710)
- Parent and Community Involvement Procedure (PR558)
- Promoting a Positive School Climate Procedure (PR697)
- Board Code of Conduct Procedure (PR585)
- Use of Service Animals by the General Public Procedure (PR604)
- Use of Support Persons by the General Public Procedure (PR605)
- Use of Assistive Devices by the General Public Procedure (PR606)

### **Legal Framework**

- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
- Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
- Education Act
- Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation, 2014
- Katelynn's Principle Act (Decisions Affecting Children), 2016
- Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy 2009
- Ontario Human Rights Code
- Occupational Health and Safety Act

### **Ontario Ministry of Education's Policy/Program Memoranda**

- Policy/Program Memorandum 119 (PPM 119), Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools
- Policy/Program Memorandum 144 (PPM 144), Bullying Prevention and Intervention

## **11. APPENDICES**

Appendix A – Definitions Glossary

Appendix B – Katelynn’s Principle Act (Decisions Affecting Children), 2016

## Definitions Glossary

This glossary is provided to assist in understanding various terms used in this document, as well as terms they may encounter in the context of discussions of Equity and Inclusive Education. Terminology in the area of Equity and Inclusive Education is constantly evolving. The TDSB recognizes that terms and usages favoured by various groups and individuals, in various contexts, and at different points in time may differ and that this glossary is not meant to be a comprehensive, nor definitive list.

**Ableism:** is defined as a belief system, analogous to Racism, Sexism or ageism, that sees persons with disabilities as being less worthy of respect and consideration, less able to contribute and participate, or of less inherent value than others. Ableism may be conscious or unconscious, and may be embedded in institutions, systems or the broader Culture of a society. It can limit the opportunities of persons with disabilities and reduce their Inclusion in the life of their communities. (Refer to the Ontario Human Rights Commission's [Guidelines on Accessible Education](#) and Policy on [Ableism and Discrimination Based on Disability](#), at <www.ohrc.on.ca>.

**Aboriginal peoples:** The descendants of the original inhabitants of North America. Section 35(2) of the Constitution Act, 1982, states: "In this Act, 'Aboriginal peoples of Canada' includes the Indian, Inuit, and Métis peoples of Canada". These separate groups have unique heritages, Languages, cultural practices, and spiritual beliefs. Their common link is their Indigenous Ancestry.

**Acceptance:** An affirmation and recognition of people whose Race, Ancestry, Place of Origin, Colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, Creed, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Age, Gender Identity and expression, Marital Status, Family Status, abilities, or other, similar characteristics or attributes are different from one's own. Acceptance goes beyond tolerance, in that it implies a positive and welcoming attitude.

**Accommodation:** An adjustment made to policies, programs, guidelines, or practices, including adjustments to physical settings and various types of criteria, that ensures fair and equitable, access, service and treatment for individuals to participate equally and perform to the best of their ability in the workplace or an educational setting. Accommodation is considered appropriate if it results in equal opportunity to enjoy the same level of benefits and Privileges experienced by others, or if it is proposed or adopted to achieve equal opportunity, and meets the individual's needs. The most appropriate accommodation is the one that, respects dignity (including autonomy, comfort and confidentiality), responds to a person (including autonomy), comfort and allows for integration and full participation, short of Undue hardship. Accommodations are provided so that individuals are not disadvantaged or discriminated against on the basis of the prohibited grounds of Discrimination identified in the Ontario Human Rights

Code or other factors. (Refer to the Ontario Human Rights Commission's [Guidelines on Accessible Education](#) and [Policy and Guidelines on Disability and the Duty to Accommodate](#), at <www.ohrc.on.ca>)

**Accommodations for students with special education needs:** The term Accommodations has a specific meaning in special education. Accommodations for students with special education needs include special teaching and assessment strategies, human supports, and/or individualized equipment that help the student learn and demonstrate learning

**Achievement Gaps:** Refers to the average difference in levels of educational achievement between different demographic sub-groups of students in a given educational context (e.g., school, or district). These sub-groups may reflect differences in Gender Identity, Gender Expression, Race, Ethnicity, country of origin, socio-economic circumstances, Sexual Orientation, Disability/ level of ability or any other social characteristic of the student. Achievement gaps among sub-groups of students may be identified at any grade or Age and may exist within one or many achievement variables (e.g., course report card results, graduation rates, standardized test scores) (Council of Ontario Directors of Education, page 15).

**Age:** How old a person is or is perceived to be. Age Discrimination involves treating persons in an unequal fashion due to age in a way that is contrary to Human Rights law.

**Ancestry:** Lineage, or whom you are descended from and how you trace family and heritage.

**Anti-Black racism:** is one of the many results of White Supremacy, and is distinct from Anti-Racism. The distinction comes about because anti-black racism and its complexities and nuances are specific to the histories and bodies of African/African descendant/Black peoples. Anti-black racism promotes and upholds unearned Privileges based on whiteness and proximity to whiteness and Eurocentric ideals, in terms of phenotype, Culture, and performativity. It also reinforces internalized Hate and Oppression faced by people of African descent as a result of the idealizing and privileging of whiteness. This includes shadeism, Colourism and other damaging manifestations of White Supremacy such as the use and (re)perpetuation of the dominant and "universal" Eurocentric lens and views. Anti-black racism is deeply invested in the continuation of Power structures within the dominant society that disadvantage, deny and exclude people of African descent, and actively works against measures implemented to improve Equity and ultimately liberation for African/African descendant/Black peoples.

At the core of anti-black racism is seeing African/African descendant/Black bodies as sub-human. An example of Anti-Black racism is anti-Blackness, which is based on a

negative, essentialized, criminalized view and interpretation of the Black body and the Black experience. Anti-Black Racism is unequal Power relations, and its intersections include but are not limited to destructive beliefs, attitudes, Prejudice, stereotyping and/or Discrimination that are directed at people of African descent and rooted in their unique history and experience of enslavement and colonization globally, including here in Canada.

The legacy of anti-Black racism lies in the historical and current social, economic, cultural, and political Marginalization of Black bodies everywhere, including Black Torontonians. It is experienced as a lack of access and Barriers to opportunity and inequitable outcomes in the social determinants of health, including health, mental health and well-being, education, housing and income. This results in higher rates of precarious employment and unemployment, significant poverty, and overrepresentation in the criminal justice, mental health, and child welfare systems for people of African descent.

Toronto is the most diverse city in the world. However, studies continue to show that anti-Black racism still exists in this city, affecting the life chances of more than 200,000 Black people who call Toronto home. (Adapted in part from - The Interim Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism).

**Anti-discrimination education:** An approach that seeks to eliminate from an educational system and its practices all forms of discrimination based on the prohibited grounds identified in the Ontario Human Rights Code and other factors. Anti-discrimination education seeks to identify and change educational policies, procedures, and practices that may unintentionally condone or foster discrimination, as well as the attitudes and behaviours that underlie and reinforce such policies and practices. It provides teachers and students with the knowledge and skills that will enable them to critically examine issues related to Discrimination, Power, and Privilege. Anti-discrimination education promotes the removal of discriminatory Biases and systemic Barriers.

**Anti-Indigenous racism:** A distinct form of Racism that targets Indigenous Peoples based on Race, heritage, traditions, Languages and Ancestry and rooted in colonial notions of white, settler dominance and superiority - resulting in systemic Oppression, denial of rights, cultural erasure, erosion of dignity and individual actions of Discrimination, hatred and violence. In Canada the process of colonization has resulted in ongoing and entrenched Systemic Racism and systematic destruction of traditions, values, Language, and basic Human Rights against Indigenous Peoples that has been described by some as 'cultural genocide'. Racist and colonial ideologies continue to significantly affect the health, well-being, success, fair and just treatment and opportunities for of Indigenous Peoples, cutting across the social determinants of



health; impacting access to education, housing, food security and employment, and permeating societal systems and institutions including the health care, child welfare and criminal justice systems.

**Antiracist:** Seeking the elimination of Racism in all its forms, including Systemic Racism.

**Anti-racism:** is the practice of identifying, challenging, and changing the values, structures and behaviors that perpetuate Systemic Racism. (Ontario Anti-Racism Secretariat) Anti-racism examines the Power Imbalances between racialized people and non-racialized/white people. These imbalances play out in the form of unearned Privileges that white people benefit from and racialized people do not (McIntosh, 1988).

**Anti-racist education:** Anti-racist education teaches an active way of seeing, and being in, the world, in order to transform it. It challenges Bias and discriminatory colonial Curriculum assessment and pedagogy by embedding the perspectives of Aboriginal and racialized communities into an educational system and its practices. Antiracist education seeks to identify and change educational policies, procedures, and practices that may foster Racism, implicit Bias, colonial settler Privilege and white Privilege as well as the Racist attitudes and behaviours that underlie and reinforce such policies and practices. Because Racism occurs at all levels and spheres of society (and can function to produce and maintain exclusionary 'levels' and 'spheres'), anti-racism education/activism is necessary in all aspects of society. In other words, it doesn't just happen 'in the workplace,' 'in the classroom,' or in selected aspects of our lives. A person who practices anti-racism education works to become aware of: how Racism affects the lived experience of people of Colour and Indigenous Peoples; how Racism is systemic, and has been part of many foundational aspects of society throughout history, and can be manifested in both individual attitudes and behaviours as well as formal (and 'unspoken') policies and practices within institutions; how white people participate, often unknowingly, in Racist systems of Oppression with white Privilege – which left unchallenged contributes Systemic Racism throughout society.

**Anti-Oppressive Practice (AOP):** an interdisciplinary approach that requires the practitioner to critically examine the Power Imbalance inherent in an organizational structure with regards to the larger sociocultural context to develop strategies for creating an egalitarian environment free from Oppression, Racism, Sexism, Homophobia and other forms of Discrimination in the larger society by engaging at both the local and systemic level. In general community practice, it is about responding to Oppression by Dominant Groups and individuals. In social services, it challenges oppressive practices and structures and helps remove Barriers and Bias, ensuring access and service delivery provided in a fully inclusive manner.

**Anti-Semitism:** a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of anti-Semitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.

**Anti-Oppressive Education:** Premised on the notion that many “traditional” and “commonsense” ways of engaging in education contributes to Oppression in schools and society. It also relies on the notion that many "commonsense" approaches to education reform mask or exacerbate oppressive education methods. The consequences of anti-oppressive education include a deep commitment to changing how educators conceptualize and engage in Curriculum, pedagogy, classroom management and school Culture. There is a recognition that Bias and Barriers exist and are reinforced within the institutional structure and policies and therefore must be transformed along with the teaching practices. Anti-oppressive education, explores Privileges and Power Imbalances within social groups and structures and expects to be different, perhaps uncomfortable, and even controversial.

**Barrier:** An obstacle to Equity that may be overt or subtle, intended or unintended, and systemic or specific to an individual or group, and that prevents or limits access to opportunities, benefits, services or advantages that are available to other members of society.

**Bias:** An opinion, preference, Prejudice, or inclination that limits the ability to make fair, objective, or accurate judgements. Biases may be held by an individual, group, or institution and may be either conscious/ explicit or unconscious/ implicit. Unconscious/ implicit biases are social stereotypes about certain groups of people that individuals form outside their own conscious awareness. Everyone holds unconscious beliefs about various social and identity groups, and these biases stem from one’s tendency to organize social worlds by categorizing.

Unconscious bias is far more prevalent than conscious Prejudice and often incompatible with one’s conscious values. Certain scenarios can activate unconscious attitudes and beliefs. For example, biases may be more prevalent when multi-tasking, making quick decisions or working under time pressure.

**Bisexual:** a word describing a person whose Sexual Orientation is directed toward men and women, though not necessarily at the same time.

**Board:** The Toronto District School Board, which is also referred to as “TDSB”.

**Body Image:** A person's sense of their own physical appearance, usually in relation to others or in relation to some cultural "ideal". A person's perception of their appearance

can be different from how others actually perceive them leading to body image Discrimination or Lookism.

**Caregivers:** Persons involved in a care and commitment relationship that may be ongoing, long-term, significant and where responsibilities have shifted to a non-family member. (Ontario Human Rights Commission, [Defining Family Status](http://www.ohrc.on.ca)) <www.ohrc.on.ca>.

**Classism:** Prejudice or Discrimination based on socio-economic class. The institutional, cultural, and individual set of practices and beliefs that assign differential value to people according to their socio-economic class, oppressing many and privileging few. Almost universally, classism specifically denotes the Prejudice against and subjugation and Oppression of those in the lower classes by the more Privileged upper class and an economic system which creates excessive inequality and causes basic human needs to go unmet.

**Cisgendered:** having a gender-identity that is congruent with one's Biological Sex assigned at birth (e.g. one's Biological Sex is female and one's gender-identity is as a woman).

**Collaborative Learning Communities:** Communities that build, support and value partnerships among students, educators, families and communities within dynamic and flexible learning environments. Learners in collaborative communities embrace challenges, creativity and problem solving with a commitment and responsibility for contributing to the shared learning of all members of the learning community. ( York Region District School Board)

**Creed (Religion):** Creed includes religion in the broadest sense. Creed may also include non-religious belief systems that, like religion, substantially influence a person's identity, worldview and way of life. A creed is sincerely, freely and deeply held; is integrally linked to a person's identity, self-definition and fulfilment; is a particular and comprehensive, overarching system of belief that governs one's conduct and practices; addresses ultimate questions of human existence, including ideas about life, purpose, death, and the existence or non-existence of a Creator and/or a higher or different order of existence; and has some "nexus" or connection to an organization or community that professes a shared system of belief (OHRC Policy on Preventing Discrimination based on Creed (2015))

**Culture:** Broadly described, culture can include economic systems, political ideologies and processes, ways of life and social mores, educational institutions, social programs, the environment, technological systems, recreational practices, customs and traditions, artistic and heritage activities, transportation and communication industries, and religious and spiritual activities.

**Curriculum:** the total learning environment, including physical environment, learning materials, pedagogical practices, assessment instruments, School Climate and co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.

**Cyber-bullying:** Under the Education Act (s.1.0.0.2), bullying by electronic means, including by “(a) creating a web page or a blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person; (b) impersonating another person as the author of content or messages posted on the internet; and (c) communicating material electronically to more than one individual or posting material on a website that may be accessed by one or more individuals.” Cyber-bullying can involve the use of email, cell phones, text messages, and/or social media sites to threaten, harass, embarrass, socially exclude, or damage reputations and friendships. It may include put-downs or insults and can also involve spreading rumours; sharing private information, photos, or videos; or threatening to harm someone. Cyber-bullying is always aggressive and hurtful. (Refer to [Bullying – We Can All Help Stop It: A Guide for Parents of Elementary and Secondary School Students](#), at <[www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/multi/english/BullyingEN.pdf](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/multi/english/BullyingEN.pdf)>)

**Code grounds:** The grounds of Discrimination under the Ontario Human Rights Code: race, Ancestry, Place of Origin, Colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, Creed (Religion), Sex, Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, Disability, Age, Marital Status (including same-sex partners), Family Status, receipt of public assistance (in housing Accommodation only), and record of offences (in employment only). People are also protected from Discrimination based on intersecting grounds (see *Intersectionality*), or association with someone who identifies with a Code ground, or when they are perceived to be a member of a group identified by a [Code ground](#). (Refer to <[www.ohrc.on.ca/en/about-commission](http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/about-commission)>)

**Colonialism:** Colonialism is a practice of domination, which involves the subjugation of one people to another. Settler colonialism — such as in the case of Canada — is the unique process where the colonizing population does not leave the territory, asserts ongoing sovereignty to the land, actively seeks to assimilate the Indigenous populations and extinguish their Cultures, traditions and ties to the land.

**Disability:** “Disability” covers a broad range and degree of conditions, some visible and some not visible. A disability may have been present from birth, caused by an accident, or developed over time. There are physical, mental and learning disabilities, mental disorders, hearing or vision disabilities, epilepsy, drug and alcohol dependencies, environmental sensitivities, and other conditions.

**The Code:** protects people from Discrimination because of past, present and perceived disabilities. For example, the Code protects a person who faces Discrimination because she is a recovered alcoholic. So is a person whose condition does not limit their

workplace abilities, but who is believed to be at greater risk of being able to do less in the future. (Ontario Human Rights Commission's Policy on Ableism and Discrimination based on Disability and the Policy on preventing Discrimination based on mental health disabilities and addictions)

**Disaggregated demographic data:** In the context of Social Identity data, this means breaking down composite ("aggregate") categories such as Race, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity into component parts, such as Black, Chinese, Arab, straight, Gay, Lesbian, male, female, non-binary, etc.

**Discrimination:** Any practice or behaviour, whether intentional or not, which has a negative effect on an individual or group because of Race, Ancestry, Place of Origin, Colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, Creed, gender, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, Sexual Orientation, Age, Marital Status, Family Status, Disability/ level of ability or Socio-Economic Status. Discrimination, whether intentional or unintentional, has the effect of preventing or limiting access to opportunities, benefits, services or advantages that are available to other members of society. Discrimination may be evident in organizational and institutional structures, policies, procedures, and programs, as well as in the attitudes and behaviours of individuals.

**Disparity:** Refers to the unequal outcomes of one group as compared to another.

**Disproportionate:** Refers to the overrepresentation of a particular group of people in a particular program or system as compared to their representation in the general population.

**Diversity:** The presence of a wide range of human qualities and attributes within a group, organization, or society. The dimensions of diversity include, but are not limited to, Race, Colour, Creed, Culture, Ethnicity, linguistic origin, Disability/ level of ability, socio-economic class, Age, Ancestry, Nationality, Place of Origin, Religion, Sex, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, Sexual Orientation, Family Status, and Marital Status.

**Dominant Group:** A group that is considered the most powerful and Privileged of groups in a particular society and that exercises Power and influence over others through social, economic and institutional means.

**Duty to accommodate:** The legal obligation that school boards, employers, unions, and service providers have under the [Ontario Human Rights Code](#) to take measures that enable people to benefit from and take part in the provision of services equally and to participate equally and perform to the best of their ability in the workplace or an educational setting. (Refer to <[www.ohrc.on.ca](http://www.ohrc.on.ca)>)

**Elder:** Elders are very important members of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit communities. The term Elder refers to someone who has attained a high degree of understanding of First Nation, Métis, or Inuit history, traditional teachings, ceremonies, and healing practices. Elders have earned the right to pass this knowledge on to others and to give advice and guidance on personal issues, as well as on issues affecting their communities and nations. First Nation, Métis, and Inuit peoples value their Elders and all older people, and address them with the utmost respect, but It is important to note that “Elder” does not necessarily indicate Age. In First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Cultures, an Elder is designated as such having been deemed to have acquired significant knowledge about essential teachings in their Culture and to have gained the wisdom drawn from experience that enables them to share their insight with others. (Source: OISE UoT *Deepening Knowledge Project*; Elder Invitation Protocol)

**Employment equity:** A program designated to identify, challenge and remove systemic Barriers to Equality of access and out-comes in all aspects of employment and which leads to equitable representation of designated groups at all levels of employment. –

**Equality:** The achievement of equal status in society in terms of access to opportunities, support, rewards and economic and social Power for all without regard to Race, Colour, Creed, Culture, Ethnicity, linguistic origin, Disability/ level of ability, socio-economic class, Age, Ancestry, Nationality, Place of Origin, Religion, Sex, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, Sexual Orientation, Family Status, and Marital Status.

**Equity:** Ensures Equality of opportunities and outcomes for all by responding fair and proportionality to the needs of individuals. Equity is not the same as equal treatment because it recognizes a social-cultural Power Imbalance that unfairly Privilege some while oppressing others and therefore focuses on redressing Disparity - meeting individual needs to ensure fair access, outcomes and participation that results in Equality, acknowledging historical and present Systemic Discrimination against identified groups and removing Barriers, eliminating Discrimination and remedying the impact of past Discrimination and current Oppression. Equity practices ensure fair, inclusive and respectful treatment of all people, with consideration of individual and group diversities and Intersectionality of multiple social identities, access to Privileges and impacts of Oppression. Equity honours and accommodates the specific needs of individuals/ groups.

**Historically and currently disenfranchised groups and communities:** Persons and communities who have experienced, and or, are more likely to experience, and or, are experiencing Bias, Oppression, disadvantage or Discrimination based on one or more of these factors: Colour, Creed, Culture, Ethnicity, linguistic origin, Disability or level of ability, socio-economic class, Age, Ancestry, Nationality, Place of Origin, Biological Sex,

Gender Identity, Gender Expression, Sexual Orientation, Family Status, and Marital Status.

**Ethnicity:** Refers to a group of people having a heritage and a common Ancestry or shared historical past, as well as identifiable physical, cultural, linguistic and religious characteristics, whether or not they live in their country of origin.

**Eurocentrism:** is a worldview centered on and Biased towards Western civilization. The exact scope of centrism varies from the entire Western world to only Europe focusing on European Culture or history to the exclusion of a wider view of the world; implicitly regarding European Culture as preeminent. When applied to history, it may refer to an apologetic stance towards European Colonialism and other forms of imperialism.

**Family Status:** The status of being in a parent/caregiver/guardian and child relationship.

**Fairness:** Impartial and just treatment or behaviour without favouritism or Discrimination.

**First Nation:** A term that came into common usage in the 1970s to replace the word Indian, which many found offensive. The term *First Nation* has been adopted to replace the word “band” in the names of communities.

**Gay:** a word to describe a person whose primary Sexual Orientation is to members of the same Sex or who identifies as a member of the gay community. This word can refer to men and women, although many women prefer the term “Lesbian.”

**Gender Identity:** How a person identifies themselves based on an individual’s intrinsic sense of self and their sense of being female, male, a combination of both, or neither regardless of their Biological Sex.

**Gender Expression:** Refers to the way an individual expresses their Gender Identity (e.g. in the way they dress, the length and style of their hair, the way they act or speak, the volume of their voice, and in their choice of whether or not to wear make-up.) Understandings of gender expression are culturally specific and will change over time.

**Harassment:** A form of Discrimination that is often but not always, persistent, ongoing conduct or communication, in any form, of attitudes, beliefs or actions towards an individual or group which are known to be, or should reasonably be known to be unwelcome, inappropriate, intimidating or offensive. A single act or expression can constitute harassment, for example, if it is a serious violation or it is from a person in authority. Harassment may be either subtle or blunt.

**Hate:** expressions of Bias, Prejudice and bigotry that are carried out by individuals, groups, organizations and states, directed against stigmatized and marginalized persons and groups in communities, and intended to affirm and secure existing structures of domination and subordination. Hate activities and incidents represent some of the most destructive forms of Human Rights-based Discrimination by promoting hatred against identifiable groups of people. Some hate incidents are also considered criminal offences committed against a person or property and motivated, in whole or in part, by Bias or Prejudice based on real or perceived Race, Ancestry, Place of Origin, Colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, Creed, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, Age, Marital Status, Family Status, Socio-Economic Status or Disability/ level of ability/ or any other similar factor.

**Homophobia:** irrational fear, hatred, Prejudice or negative attitudes toward homosexuality and people who are Gay or Lesbian. Homophobia can take overt and covert, as well as subtle and extreme, forms. Homophobia includes behaviours such as jokes, name-calling, exclusion, Gay bashing, etc. Homophobia may be caused by individual actions or systemic/ institutional Bias and Oppression, towards people who are, or who are perceived to be, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender or Queer.

**Human Rights:** Rights that recognize the dignity and worth of every person, and provide for equal rights and opportunities without Discrimination, regardless of Race, Ancestry, Place of Origin, Colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, Creed, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, Age, Marital Status, Family Status, Socio-Economic Status or Disability/level of ability, as set out in the Ontario Human Rights Code, or other similar factors.

**Inclusion:** A way of thinking and acting that demonstrates universal Acceptance and promotes a sense of belonging for all learners. It is an attitude and approach that embraces Diversity and learner differences and promotes equitable opportunities for all learners. ([Alberta Education Principles of Inclusion](http://education.alberta.ca/inclusive-education)) <education.alberta.ca/inclusive-education>

**Inclusive Design:** Identifying and removing Barriers for people that require individual Accommodations before an individual Accommodation request or complaint has been made. Effective inclusive design in organizations reduces the need for people to ask for individual Accommodations because the principles of inclusive design have been used when creating policies, procedures, programs, and facilities (from the Ontario Human Rights Commission, Inclusive Design Fact Sheet).

**Inclusive Education:** Education that is rooted in Anti-Oppressive Practice ensuring Equity in content, pedagogy, access and climate based on the principles of Acceptance, Inclusion and learning designed to meet the individual needs of all learners to achieve



fair and successful outcomes . Students see themselves reflected in their Curriculum, school staff teams, their physical surroundings, and the broader environment, in which Diversity is honoured and all individuals are respected.

**Indigenous Peoples:** This is a collective name for the original peoples of North America and their descendants. The Canadian Constitution recognizes three distinct groups of Aboriginal peoples: Indians (referred to as First Nations), Métis and Inuit.

**Internalized Oppression:** When members of a marginalized group accept negative aspects of Stereotypes assigned to them by the Dominant Group, and begin to believe that they are inferior. The incorporation by individuals within an oppressed group of the Prejudices against them within the dominant society can result in self-hatred, self-concealment, fear of violence, feelings of inferiority, resignation, isolation, and powerlessness. It is a mechanism within an oppressive system for perpetuating Power Imbalance. (519 Education Training Glossary)

**Intersectionality:** The overlapping, in the context of an individual or group, of two or more prohibited grounds of Discrimination under the Ontario Human Rights Code, or other factors, which may result in additional, compounded Biases or Barriers to Equity for that individual or group.

**Inuit:** Aboriginal people in northern Canada, living mainly in Nunavut, the Northwest Territories, northern Quebec, and Labrador. Ontario has a very small Inuit population. The Inuit are not covered by the Indian Act.

**Islamophobia:** Includes Racism, Stereotypes, Prejudice, fear or acts of hostility directed towards individual Muslims or followers of Islam in general. In addition to individual acts of intolerance and racial profiling, Islamophobia can lead to viewing and treating Muslims as a greater security threat on an institutional, systemic and societal level. (Ontario Human Rights Commission, Policy on Preventing Discrimination Based on Creed).

**Lesbian:** a female whose primary Sexual Orientation is to other women or who identifies as a member of the lesbian community.

**LGBTTTIQ:** a common acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Transgendered, Two-Spirit, Intersex and Queer individuals/communities. This acronym may or may not be used in a particular community. For example, in some places, the acronym LGBT (for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered/Transsexual) may be more common.

**Language:** The first language we learn or the language spoken by our parents/Caregivers/ guardians and others who take care of us as children. This may

also include dialects. There is almost inevitably a link between the language we speak or the accent with which we speak a particular language on the one hand, and our Ancestry, ethnic origin or Place of Origin on the other. A person's accent is also often associated with their "mother tongue" or Place of Origin.

**Lookism:** A form of Discrimination or Prejudice against people based on their physical appearance.

**Marginalization:** Refers to a long-term, structural process of Systemic Discrimination that creates a class of disadvantaged minorities. These groups become permanently confined to the margins of society; their status is continually reproduced because of the various dimensions of exclusion particularly in the labour market, but also from full and meaningful participation in society.

**Marital Status:** The status of being married, single, widowed, divorced or separated and includes the status of living with a person in a conjugal relationship outside marriage, including but not limited to same-sex and opposite Sex relationships.

**Métis:** People of mixed First Nation and European Ancestry. The Métis Culture draws on diverse ancestral origins, such as Scottish, Irish, French, Ojibwe, and Cree.

**Microaggression:** A casual comment or action that subtly and often unconsciously or unintentionally expresses a Prejudiced attitude toward a member of a marginalized group or Social Identity. People perpetrating microaggressions often intend no offense and are unaware they are causing harm with statements or actions that repeat or affirm Stereotypes about Minority groups or subtly demean them. They also position the dominant Culture as normal and the minority as other – different or aberrant, express disapproval of or discomfort with Minority groups, that assume all Minority group members are the same, minimize the existence of Discrimination against Minority groups, seek to deny their own Bias, or minimize real conflict between Minority groups and the dominant Culture.

**Minority Group:** A group of people within a given society that has little or no access to social, economic, political, cultural, or religious Power. The term may refer to a group that is small in number or it may connote inferior social position.

**Nationality:** The status of belonging to a particular nation.

**Non-discrimination:** The principle of non-discrimination seeks “to guarantee that Human Rights are exercised without Discrimination of any kind based on Race, Colour, Sex, Language, Religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status such as Disability, Age, marital and Family Status, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, health status, place of residence, economic and social

situation". (*Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, General Comment No. 20, Non-discrimination in economic, social and cultural rights; 2009.*)

**Ontario Human Rights Code (“the Code”):** A provincial law that gives everyone equal rights and opportunities, without Discrimination, in specific areas such as education, jobs, housing, and services. The goal of [The Code](#) is to address and prevent Discrimination and Harassment. (Refer to <[www.ohrc.on.ca](http://www.ohrc.on.ca)>)

**Opportunity Gap:** Closely related to an Achievement Gap this term refers to the ways in which Race, Ethnicity, socioeconomic status, English proficiency, community wealth, familial situations, or other factors contribute to or perpetuate lower educational aspirations, achievement, and attainment for certain groups of students. Opportunity gap refers to the unequal or inequitable distribution of resources and opportunities; while Achievement Gap refers to the unequal or inequitable distribution of educational results.

**Oppression:** prolonged, systemic, abuse of Power or control by one group of people (the Dominant Group) at the expense others (the oppressed) and maintains a cultural imbalance of Power which socially supports mistreatment and exploitation of all groups of ‘less powerful’ individuals. This results in unjust advantages, status and benefits for one group over the other and is maintained by social beliefs, economic and institutional structures and subtle and overt cultural practices. Because oppression is institutionalized in our society, target group members often face Barriers and limitations in many aspects of social participation i.e. school, health care, social services, employment, parenting, housing, etc. Oppression actively provides unearned Privileges and protections to some members of our community, allowing them to ignore the presence of Discrimination and or Barriers to fair and equal access and opportunity such as Classism, Racism, Ableism, Sexism, Homophobia, Transphobia.

**Place of Origin:** Where one is originally from, generally meaning country of birth, or if born in Canada it could include an area, province or region of the country, (i.e. Quebec, Newfoundland, The West Coast, Toronto, etc.)

**Positive School Climate:** The school climate may be defined as the learning environment and relationships found within a school and school community. A positive school climate exists when all members of the school community feel safe, included, and accepted, and actively promote positive behaviours and interactions. Principles of Equity and Inclusive Education are embedded in the learning environment to support a positive school climate and a Culture of mutual respect. A positive school climate is a crucial component of bullying prevention.

**Power:** Access to Privileges such as information/knowledge, connections, experience and expertise, resources and decision making that enhance a person’s chances of

getting what they need to live a comfortable, safe, productive and profitable life. Each person has different levels of power in different contexts depending on a personal combination of Privileges and Oppression. (519 Education Training Glossary)

**Power Dynamics:** The process by which one group defines and subordinates other groups and subjects them to differential and unequal treatment.

**Power Imbalance:** A situation in which an individual or group is able to influence others and impose its beliefs, subjecting other individuals and/or groups to differential and unequal treatment.

**Prejudice:** The pre-judgment (usually negative) of groups or individuals, or preconceived notions about them, based on misinformation, Bias, or Stereotypes.

**Privilege:** Unearned freedoms, rights, benefits, access, and/or opportunities that provide unfair advantages for members of the Dominant Group(s) in society. Because privileges are granted by mere affiliation with the Dominant Group(s), some people are not always aware of the privileges they have. Examples include: cisgender privilege, straight privilege, male privilege, settler privilege, White privilege, etc. When we take for granted advantages our privileges may bring us – those advantages are gained at the expense of and systemic disadvantaging of others.

**Progressive discipline:** A Whole-School Approach that uses a continuum of prevention programs, interventions, supports, and consequences to address inappropriate student behaviour, as well as a variety of strategies to promote and foster positive behaviours. Disciplinary measures are applied within a framework that shifts the focus from one that is solely punitive to one that is both corrective and supportive.

**Queer:** traditionally, a derogatory and offensive term for LGBTTTIQ people. Many LGBTTTIQ people have reclaimed this word and use it proudly to describe their identity. Often used as a description of people's non-heterosexual Sexual Orientations in a non-specific and unbiased manner because the terms Gay, Lesbian, or Bisexual are not sufficient for their inner feelings or sense of identity. Also used as a rejection of hetro and cisnormative binary to better culturally identify the wide spectrum of relationships, Gender Expressions, identities and Sexual Orientations.

**Race (Colour):** Race is a socially constructed way of judging, categorizing and creating difference among people based on physical characteristics such as skin colour, eye, lips and nose shape, hair texture and body shape. The process of social construction of race is termed "Racialization." This is the "process by which societies construct races as real, different and unequal in ways that matter to economic, political and social life. Despite the fact that there are no biological "races", the social construction of race is a powerful force with real consequences for individuals. Someone's "race" can also

extend to specific traits which are deemed to be “abnormal” and of less worth. Individuals may have Prejudices related to various racialized characteristics. In addition to physical features, these characteristics could include accent, dialect or manner of speech, name, clothing and grooming, diet, beliefs and practices, leisure preferences, and places of origin.

**Racialization:** Racialization refers to the “the process by which societies construct Races as real, different and unequal in ways that matter to economic, political and social life” (Commission on Systemic Racism in the Ontario Criminal Justice System, 1995). Racial categories are not based on science or biology but on differences that society has chosen to emphasize, with significant consequences for people’s lives. People can be racialized not only based on skin Colour but also other perceived characteristics such as their Culture, Language, customs, Ancestry, country or Place of Origin, or Religion as is the case with Islamophobia and anti-Semitism.

**Racialized group:** A group of people who may experience social inequities on the basis of Race, Colour, and/or Ethnicity, and who may be subjected to differential treatment.

**Racism:** A set of erroneous assumptions, opinions, and actions stemming from the belief that one Race is inherently superior to another. Racism may be evident in organizational and institutional structures, policies, procedures, and programs, as well as in the attitudes and behaviours of individuals.

**Racist:** A term referring to the beliefs and/or actions of an individual, institution, or organization that imply (directly or indirectly) that certain groups are inherently superior to others.

**Safe and Accepting Schools Team:** Team established at every TDSB school that are responsible for fostering a safe, inclusive, and accepting School Climate. Each team includes at least one student and must include at least one parent, one teacher, one non-teaching staff member, one community partner, and the principal. The chair of this team must be a staff member. (from the Ministry of Education’s PPM144 Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy)

**School Climate:** The learning environment and relationships found within a school and school community.

**Sex/ Biological Sex:** Generally refers to the sex assigned at birth based on external genitalia but also includes internal reproductive structures, chromosomes, hormone levels, and secondary sex characteristics such as breasts, facial and body hair, and fat distribution.

**Sexism:** Prejudice, stereotyping, and Discrimination directed against people on the basis of their Biological Sex and/ or Gender Identity/ expression. Sexism may be evident in organizational and institutional structures, policies, procedures, and programs, as well as in the attitudes and behaviours of individuals. Sexism can affect either gender, but it is particularly documented as affecting women and girls. It has been linked to Stereotypes and gender roles, and may include the belief that one Sex or Gender Identity is intrinsically superior to another and is most commonly associated with attitudes, procedures and/or patterns – economic, social and cultural – whose effect, though not necessarily whose conscious intention, is to create, maintain and extend the Power, influence and Privilege of males and/or masculinity over females and/or femininity. Extreme sexism may foster sexual Harassment, rape, and other forms of sexual violence.

**Sexual Orientation:** A term for the emotional, physical, romantic, sexual and spiritual attraction, desire or affection for another person. Examples include asexuality, heterosexuality, Bisexuality and homosexuality. Sexual orientation is much more accurately viewed as an attraction continuum that includes a range of gender identities, expressions and biological sexes.

**Socio-Economic Status:** The economic, social and political relationships in which people operate in a given social order. These relationships reflect the areas of income level, education, access to goods and services, type of occupation, sense of ownership or entitlement and other indicators of social rank or class.

**Social Identity:** Those aspects of a person that are defined in terms their group membership, or their perceived group membership in broad social categories ( i.e. Race, Disability/level of ability, Gender Identity, etc.) Social identities are most accurate when individuals self-identify or chose of how they want to be identified, as opposed to being labelled by society or others.

**Stereotype:** A false or generalized, and usually negative, conception of a group of people that results in the unconscious or conscious categorization of each member of that group, without regard for individual differences. Stereotyping may be based on Race, Ancestry, Place of Origin, Colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, Creed, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, Age, Marital Status, Family Status, or Disability/level of ability, as set out in the Ontario Human Rights Code, or on the basis of other factors.

**Systemic Discrimination:** A pattern of discrimination that arises out of apparently neutral institutional policies or practices, that is reinforced by institutional structures and Power Dynamics, and that results in the differential and unequal treatment of members of certain groups.

**Systemic Racism:** When institutions or systems create or maintain racial inequity, often as a result of hidden institutional Biases in policies, practices and procedures that Privilege some groups and disadvantage others.

**Social inclusion:** Is based on notions of belonging, Acceptance and recognition and entails the realization of full and equal participation in economic, social, cultural and political institutions. It is about recognizing and valuing Diversity; it is about engendering feelings of belonging by increasing social Equality and the participation of diverse and disadvantaged populations.

**TDSB:** the Toronto District School Board, which is also referred to as the “Board.”

**Transgender:** refers to individuals whose Gender Identity is different from what is assumed based on their Biological Sex at birth, and/or whose Gender Expression is different from the way males or females are stereotypically expected to look or behave.

**Transphobia:** Transphobia is a range of negative attitudes, feelings or actions toward Transgender or transsexual people, or toward transsexuality. Transphobia can be emotional disgust, fear, violence, anger or discomfort felt or expressed towards people who do not conform to society's gender expectations. It is often expressed alongside homophobic views and hence is often considered an aspect of Homophobia. Transphobia is a type of Prejudice and Discrimination similar to Racism and Sexism and Transgender people of color are often subjected to all three forms of discrimination at once.

**Two-spirit:** an English term coined to reflect specific cultural words used by First Nations and other Indigenous Peoples for individuals who have both a male and female spirit. Many two-spirit people are understood by settler society to be Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgendered or transsexual, or have multiple gender identities.

**Undue hardship:** Under the Ontario Human Rights Code, undue hardship is the measure for any limitations to provision of Human Rights Accommodations. Accommodations need not be provided if it causes undue or excessive hardship. However, some degree of hardship is acceptable. Undue hardship is assessed in terms of overall cost, outside sources of funding (if any) and health and safety factors. Evidence must be objective, real, direct and in the case of cost, quantifiable and so substantial it would alter the essential nature of the enterprise. Other ‘bona fide’ requirements of an organization, such as legislative requirements may also account for undue hardship factors to consider, as long as the said requirement is adopted in good faith and reasonably meant to fulfil a necessary goal, purpose or function of the organization.

**Universal Design for Learning (UDL):** A teaching approach that focuses on using teaching strategies or pedagogical materials designed to meet special needs to enhance learning for all students, regardless of Age, skills, or situation.

**White supremacy:** is a Racist ideology based upon the belief that white people are superior in many ways to people of other Races and therefore white people should be dominant over other Races. In academic usage, particularly in usage which draws on the critical Race theory, the term "white supremacy" can also refer to a political or socio-economic system where white people enjoy a structural advantage (white Privilege) over other ethnic groups, both at a collective and an individual level. White Privilege is rooted in social-cultural systems of racial Oppression that Disproportionately advantage white people over other Racialized Groups and perpetuate white dominance as the cultural norm.

**Whole-School Approach:** An all-inclusive approach to building a positive and inclusive School Climate that is based on healthy and respectful relationships throughout the whole school and community which includes everyone and their role to play in achieving safe, inclusive and accepting schools. A whole-school approach includes the government, school boards, school staff, parents, students and community members.



## **Katelynn's Principle**

### **Bill 57 (2016)**

An Act to enshrine Katelynn's Principle as the guiding principle for decisions affecting children

#### **Preamble**

Katelynn Sampson was seven years old when she died from being brutally abused over many months by her legal guardians. Many factors contributed to Katelynn's vulnerable situation and to her case not being addressed by authorities.

The jury in the coroner's inquest into the death of Katelynn Sampson made 173 recommendations for preventing another tragic death. The first recommendation, referred to as Katelynn's Principle, places children at the centre of decisions affecting them. The jury requested that all parties to the Coroner's Inquest ensure that Katelynn's Principle apply to all services, policies, legislation and decision-making affecting children.

Therefore, Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Ontario, enacts as follows:

#### **Definition**

1. In this Act, "child" means a person under the Age of eighteen years.

#### **Application**

2. This Act applies with respect to any person's Power or duty to make decisions under Ontario legislation affecting children, including decisions relating to,
  - (a) child welfare services within the meaning of the Child and Family Services Act;
  - (b) the justice system; and
  - (c) the education system.

**Katelynn’s Principle**

3. The following principles, collectively known as Katelynn’s Principle, shall be applied in making a decision affecting a child:
  1. The child must be at the centre of the decision.
  2. The child is an individual with rights. The child must always be seen, the child’s voice must be heard, and the child must be listened to and respected.
  3. The child’s heritage must be taken into consideration and respected. Attention must be paid to the broad and diverse communities the child identifies with, including communities defined by matters such as Race, Ethnicity, Religion, Language, and Sexual Orientation.
  4. Actions must be taken to ensure that a child who is capable of forming their own views is able to express those views freely and safely about matters affecting them.
  5. The child’s views must be given due weight in accordance with the child’s Age and maturity.
  6. In accordance with the child’s Age and maturity, the child must be given the opportunity to participate before any decisions affecting the child are made, whether the participation is direct or through a support person or representative.
  7. In accordance with the child’s Age and maturity, the child must be engaged through honest and respectful dialogue about how and why decisions affecting them are made.
  8. Every person who provides services to children or services affecting children is a child advocate. Advocacy may be a child’s lifeline and it must occur from the point of first contact and on a continuous basis thereafter.

**Commencement**

4. This Act comes into force on the day it receives Royal Assent.

**Short title**

5. The short title of this Act is the Katelynn’s Principle Act (Decisions Affecting Children), 2016.

**Explanatory Note**

6. The Bill enacts the Katelynn's Principle Act (Decisions Affecting Children), 2016. The Act requires that any person making a decision under Ontario legislation affecting children must apply Katelynn's Principle when making the decision.